

the U.S. Forest Service and received specialized training as smokejumpers and on the handling of unexploded balloon bombs.

As part of Operation Firefly, the 555th made some 1,200 jumps and fought more than 35 fires in Oregon, Washington, and other western States between July and October 1945.

Smokejumping is no easy feat; it is dirty, sweaty, and dangerous work, but because of the 555th's dedication and professionalism, the unit only ever sustained one fatality: Malvin Brown tragically fell to his death in the Umpqua National Forest about 45 miles northwest of Crater Lake. His death is regarded as the first smokejumper death in U.S. history.

Make no mistake about it, Malvin Brown and the other soldiers of the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion are heroes. They were the first Black paratroopers ever to serve in the U.S. Military, which they did with honor and distinction. They are also the only military unit in history to work as smokejumpers.

The soldiers of the 555th faced painful discrimination and blatant racism on a daily basis. They were barred from the store on base while at Fort Benning, GA, even though German and Italian prisoners were allowed to enter. Even after the Triple Nickles arrived in Oregon, they found most restaurants and bars would not serve them.

The Army sent the 555th to Fort Bragg, NC, following the Japanese surrender and, in December 1947, integrated the unit into the famed 82nd Airborne Division—making the 82nd the Army's first racially integrated division.

On June 3, 2017, the State of Oregon will commemorate the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion's remarkable history and important contributions to the country with the installation of an Oregon State historic marker at the Smokejumper Museum in Cave Junction.

It is my true honor to share their story today with my colleagues and to express my profound gratitude to all the Triple Nickles for their service.

75th ANNIVERSARY OF ALEUTIAN ISLANDS CAMPAIGN AND ALEUT EVACUATION

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, as we approach Memorial Day, we remember the men and women who sacrificed their lives in devotion to the causes of liberty, freedom, and democracy. As such, I would like to take the opportunity to speak about one event in our Nation's history that had a profound impact on my great State of Alaska. June 3 marks the 75th anniversary of the Aleutian Islands Campaign of the Second World War.

This "Forgotten Battle" began with the bombing of Dutch Harbor and subsequent invasions of Adak, Kiska, and Attu, AK by the navy of Imperial Japan. For the Allied forces, this cam-

paign resulted in 1,481 casualties, 640 missing, and 3,416 wounded, but perhaps what is even less known, is the impact this conflict had on the Aleut—Unangan/Unangas—peoples of Alaska.

In the months of June and July of 1942, Aleut communities were damaged, homes and personal possessions rumbled through or destroyed by Allied forces, and more than 881 Aleut civilian residents of the Pribilof Islands and the Aleutian Islands west of Unimak Island were relocated to temporary camps in Southeast Alaska. Forty-two residents of Attu were taken to Japan in September 1943, where they spent the rest of the war as prisoners, and nearly half of them died, mainly of hunger and malnutrition.

The campaign ultimately ended in an Allied victory with the Japanese withdrawal from the Aleutians in 1943, but the effects are still felt by those communities and peoples who were impacted.

Today, before the Senate, I would like to take a moment to honor the sacrifices of our servicemembers, including the 25 Aleut who joined the Armed Forces and the three who participated in the U.S. invasion to recapture Attu and later received Bronze Stars for their valor. I want to also honor the civilians, the Aleut evacuees, and Attuan prisoners of war whose communities, culture, languages, and lives were forever affected.

From June 2 to 4, 2017, a memorial ceremony will take place in Alaska to honor and acknowledge the evacuees, their descendants, and veterans of this "Forgotten Battle," both living and deceased.

REMEMBERING CECILIA ZARATE-LAUN

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life and legacy of Cecilia Zarate-Laun. Her passing leaves Wisconsin without one of its greatest advocates for justice and peace, and I am proud to pay tribute to this extraordinary woman.

Cecilia was born in Santander Province of Colombia. She was the oldest of five sisters and attended school in Bucaramanga and at the National University of Colombia. Following the completion of her studies, she took a position as a professor of nutrition, a job that led to her arrival in Madison, WI for graduate school.

Cecilia received a scholarship to attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison for her master's degree. While studying in Madison, Cecilia met her beloved husband, Jack. After completion of graduate school, Cecilia returned to Colombia, working as a nutritionist for the Colombian Government's National Nutrition Plan. In 1976, she married John "Jack" Laun and the following year returned to the United States.

In 1987, extended civil war in Colombia inspired Cecilia and Jack to cofound the Colombia Support Network

CSN, a grassroots human rights organization based in Madison, WI. Cecilia's work with CSN was her pride and joy. As CSN program director, Cecilia worked tirelessly to connect Americans to Colombian communities affected by the war. She was inspired to help establish new chapters of CSN in locations ranging from the University of Wisconsin-Madison to central New York, connecting these communities through a "sister cities" program to rural Colombian communities facing violence during the Colombian civil war.

She led over 50 delegations of citizens, journalists, and public officials to Colombia so they could fully understand the effect of the civil war. After working with Cecilia and CSN to establish a sister community relationship between Dane County, WI and San José de Apartadó, Colombia, I had the honor to accompany her on one of those delegations in 1993.

In addition to her public service through CSN, Cecilia was a member of the national board of directors of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She was also a member of the Latin American Subcommittee of the American Friends Service Committee—Quakers—served on the board of directors of the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice, and, in October of 2015, received the Global Citizen of the Year Award from the Madison Chapter of the United Nations Association.

Regardless of the cause or project, Cecilia approached everything with unparalleled strength, courage, and a sense of selflessness. She approached her battle with cancer with the same attitude. Over the last 4 years, while Cecilia fought against her disease, she continued to fight for others. Her strength was truly amazing.

While Cecilia is greatly missed by her family, friends, and community, she leaves behind a legacy for future leaders to emulate. She will always be remembered for her courageous effort to fight for those who could not fight for themselves.

Cecilia had an incredibly big heart and an unwavering commitment to others. I am fortunate to have been able to call her my friend.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL H. BENNETT

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Judge Michael H. Bennett. Judge Bennett will be retiring in May 2017 after serving 28 years as an immigration judge.

Former Oregon Governor Tom McCall once said, "Heroes are not giant statues framed against a red sky. They are people who say, 'This is my community, and it is my responsibility to make it better.'" Judge Bennett truly is a hero, for he has devoted much of his life to making the United States and his community better.

Judge MICHAEL BENNETT began his career as a general attorney for the